

REMARKS

Entry of the foregoing, re-examination and reconsideration of the subject matter identified in caption, as amended, pursuant to and consistent with 37 C.F.R. §1.112, and in light of the remarks which follow, are respectfully requested.

By the present amendments, claim 1 has been replaced by new claim 16. Support for the new claim may be found throughout the specification and originally filed claims including, in particular, the Example on page 6. New claims 17 and 18 are drawn to subject matter removed from claims 8 and 12, respectively. New claim 19 finds support on page 5, penultimate paragraph, and new claim 20 finds support on page 5, last two lines. Claims 2-4, 6 and 8-20 are now pending in this application.

Turning to the Office Action, claims 1-4, 7, 9, 10 and 13-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Shields ("Adhesives Handbook") for the reasons set forth in paragraph (2) of the Action. Reconsideration of this rejection is requested in view of the above amendments and for at least the following reasons.

The present claims are directed to a bonding process which includes the steps of applying a layer of a carcass work adhesive to a surface, applying at least one varnish layer to the carcass work adhesive layer, drying the varnish layer(s), removing the varnish layer(s) and a portion of the carcass work adhesive layer (thereby leaving a residual portion of the adhesive layer), and applying a structural adhesive to the residual portion of the carcass work adhesive layer. Thus, in the Applicant's method, the structural adhesive is bonded to the carcass work adhesive. This technique provides a bond with high torsional strength and excellent adhesion qualities.

The method described in Shields involves complete removal of a paint layer from a surface prior to the application of adhesive to the bared surface. Clearly, the method in the disclosure of Shields is far different from the method currently claimed herein. Thus, the §102(b) rejection over Shields is inapplicable to the present claims and should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-4 and 7-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the "admitted prior art" in view of Shields for the reasons given in paragraph (4) of the Office Action. Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection are respectfully requested in view of the above amendments and for at least the following reasons.

The "admitted prior art" discussed on page 2 of the specification involves the use of plastisols during assembly. A plastisol is not a carcass work adhesive or an equivalent to it. A plastisol is not an adhesive but a sealant and therefore not suited for the purpose of the invention. For strong bonding, plastisol needs to be completely removed because otherwise the plastisol would represent the weakest point in the bonding structure. It was not known in the art that excellent adhesion qualities could be attained by following the steps set forth in the present claims, specifically removing both a lacquer layer and a portion of a carcass work adhesive layer and applying an assembly adhesive to the remaining portion of the carcass work adhesive layer.

The disclosure of Shields does not supply the deficiencies in the knowledge of the prior art. The method of Shields removes the paint layer down to the bare surface before applying adhesive. The combined teachings of the "admitted prior art" and Shields clearly fails to disclose or suggest the presently claimed method.

For at least these reasons, the §103(a) rejection should be withdrawn. Such action is earnestly requested.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over the "admitted prior art" in view of Shields further taken with Process Handbook on Surface Preparation For Adhesive Bonding for reasons set forth in paragraph (5) of the Office Action. Reconsideration of this rejection is requested in view of the aforementioned amendments and for at least the reasons which follow.

The Process Handbook has been relied upon for its teaching that non-cdf treatments have been applied previously when metal surfaces are to be bonded. Process Handbook does not disclose the presently claimed steps of removing a lacquer layer and a portion of a carcass work adhesive layer and applying an assembly adhesive upon the remainder of the carcass work adhesive layer. Accordingly, the combined disclosure of "admitted prior art," Shields and Process Handbook fails to disclose or suggest the presently claimed method.

For at least these reasons, the §103(a) rejection based on "admitted prior art" in view of Shields and Process Handbook should be reconsidered and withdrawn. Such action is earnestly solicited

Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over "admitted prior art" in view of Shields, further in view of the Process Handbook, further taken with either U.S. Patent No. 4,707,391 to Hoffmann Sr. or U.S. Patent No. 4,803,105 to Kretow et al. for the reasons given in paragraph (6) of the Office Action. Reconsideration of this rejection is requested in view of the above amendments and for at least the following reasons.

Hoffmann '391 and Kretow et al. '105 were applied for their disclosure of using a cover tape over an adhesive to prevent premature adhesion. Kretow et al. '105 shows in figure 3 a release sheet 32 covering a thermosetting adhesive. By removing the release sheet an adhesive is exposed which is uncured. In the present claims, the tape covers the carcass work adhesive which has been cured by heat in the varnishing process. The purpose of the tape is not to prevent curing of the adhesive but to remove the cured paint on top of the masking tape. By removing it, a clean surface of cured carcass work adhesive is present to which the assembly adhesive is bonded. Hoffmann '391 shows a release paper which is used to protect an uncured adhesive – in this case, a repair patch. Neither of these documents discloses or suggests a bonding method which includes a step of removing lacquer layer and a portion of a carcass work adhesive layer prior to application of an assembly adhesive. As such, neither of Hoffmann '391 nor Kretow et al. '105 supplies the deficiencies in the basic combination of “admitted prior art,” Shields and Process Handbook.

Since the combined disclosures of “admitted prior art,” Shields, Process Handbook, and Hoffmann '391 or Kretow et al. '105 fail to render the claimed method *prima facie* obvious, the §103(a) rejection based on these documents should be withdrawn. Such action is respectfully requested.

The Office Action indicates that an initialed PTO-1449 was attached thereto. Applicant cannot locate the 1449 attachment and respectfully requests that a duplicate copy be sent with the next Office communication.

From the foregoing, further and favorable action in the form of a Notice of Allowance is believed to be next in order and such action is earnestly solicited. If

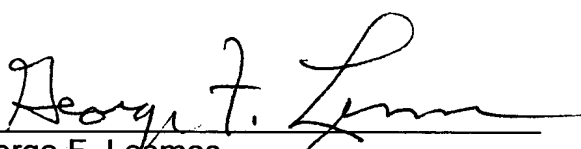
there are any questions concerning this paper of the application in general, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at (703) 939-6683 at his earliest convenience.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: _____


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